



Exploring The Island Continent -

Madagascar Photography Workshop

Nature's Light  
Photography Tours and Workshops

A photographic journey and  
masterclass with Cornelius Muller  
and Christopher Allan

10<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020

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## Summary:

Madagascar is one of those places that conjures up images of unexplored worlds. Ask travelers where they have been and one seldom hears the name of the island come up. Yet, it features strongly on travelers bucket-lists. Part of the reason is that it is just so far-removed from the average traveler's mental map of places that can be visited. The result is that although everyone knows about the avenue of baobabs, or the simple fact that most baobab species are found in Madagascar, few people have actually traveled to the country to see them, let alone the unique endemic mammal species such as the lemur and aye-aye.

Natures Light have teamed up with Island Continent Safaris to take the difficulty out of traveling to and within this enigmatic

island. Experience the highlights and contrasts of Madagascar's landscapes by exploring the dry west with its baobabs, its semi-dry tropical forest. Cross from Morondava to Toliara with its stunning scenery composed of baobab forests, thorny bushes, untouched white sandy beaches and remarkable mangrove forests. Leave the coast and cross the savannas of the South to admire colourful Isalo National Park and its rocky hills. Further north, the Highlands with their terraced rice fields unveil another landscape at every bend of the road.

This travel experience is crafted to not only create an amazing photographic experience, but also one where photographers are encouraged to push their creative and technical abilities. To this end, the workshop is geared towards photographers with at least a basic understanding of their equipment, and who want to



spend more time on growing their technique and photographic knowledge. Several critique and feedback sessions have been built into the workshop where photographers are able to discuss the images they have shot during the workshop itself.

Beginner photographers shouldn't feel intimidated by this though. With a maximum guest attendance of up to 7 photographers and 3 instructors (instructor photographer ratio of 1:3, probably the best in the industry), there is ample opportunity for one-on-one instruction. Along with the feedback sessions, there are also several 'theory' sessions: informal discussion style sessions where we discuss theory and technique before practicing in the field (examples include panoramic stitching, long-exposure technique, filter use, star-trails and night sky photography).

The fee includes all meals, accommodation, park entrance fees, guides, workshop and tuition fees AND transport within Madagascar. We use four-wheel drive vehicles throughout the workshop with luggage packed on the roof and inside the vehicles.



*Part of Madagascar's appeal are the numerous endemic species to the Island. We make sure to spend some quality time with the lemurs at Anja Park, allowing close encounters with these quizzical creatures.*

## Key Highlights:

### Photograph:

- The quintessential Madagascan animal, the lemur and chameleons
- The iconic Baobab's at Morondava
- Picturesque mountains of the interior
- The idyllic and tranquil white sand beaches of the west coast
- Open and friendly faces of the Malagasy people
- Colourful patchwork rice paddies



### Enjoy:

- Exploring the extraordinary landscape of Madagascar
- Probably the world's best instructor to participant ratio, maximizing your learning
- Having highly experienced tutors helping you on the spot as you craft your image.
- Spending time with like minded people off the beaten track in Madagascar
- An adventurous holiday that mixes amazing food, exotic locations and stunning scenes to photograph.



### **Learn about:**

- Creative Composition: The basics and beyond, such as The Element Approach, Balancing Composition etc.
- Basics to advanced techniques in digital landscape photography. There are two instructors (on groups of 5-6 participants) meaning that virtually all levels of photographer can be catered for.
- Workflow & digital asset management.
- How to create awe-inspiring astrophotography and star-trail images.
- How to create panoramic images.
- How to create time lapses (optional)
- Advanced composition for landscape imagery
- Post-production using Lightroom and Photo Shop



### **Reasons to Join Us:**

Nature's Light prides itself on 'deep-instruction'. This is a term we use to describe how we teach photographers to understand the mechanics of the camera and light as well as the subtle art of photographic composition. The goal is not just to take you to a great location and produce a great image. Our goal is that you understand how to create that image so that you can do it again yourself.

Far too many photography workshops and instructors bark out settings and instruction on how to replicate an image they, the

instructor, are creating. We differ in that we strive to get the photographers to create their own works by assisting with the pre-visualization and creation of those images. We firmly believe that this approach improves the skill and workflow of the photographers that join us.

With a maximum of 7 guests and 3 instructors we offer one of the best instructor-participant ratios available on the market, as others typically take 5 to 8 participants per instructor (or more). Moreover, this allows teaching simultaneously at beginner, intermediate and advanced level, as participants can choose what they would like to learn about, from which tutor and at what level. This ensures the steepest possible learning curve for you, regardless of your level of experience!

For the Madagascar Photography workshop we have also chosen to team with the knowledgeable owners of Island Continent Tours. Their approach to the individual aspect of the photographic tour is what prompted us to pair with them in the first place. Their contribution to the workshop will leave you with a truly memorable experience. Enough so, that even without the photographic aspect, this would be an amazing tour to take part in.

## About us, description of Tour leaders:

**Cornelius Muller** or (CM for short) has been a passionate photographer since first picking up a camera towards the end of his high school career, when film was the only medium of recording light. This means he has been photographing for more than 20 years, in various formats, on various continents, in various different capacities. CM holds a Master of Science Degree in Marine Genetic Research, which put him in a unique position of disseminating seemingly complex photographic subjects in a very understandable way, thanks to his years of listening to and teaching endlessly frustrating scientific concepts to communities on the ground — and those pesky first year students, of course. For the last ten years, he has based himself in the town of Stellenbosch, South Africa, where he runs a photographic and design agency with a close friend and business partner, focussing on product, architectural and lifestyle imagery. In his free time, he spends time making images of the surrounding landscapes in the passionate endeavour of sharing this beautiful planet we find ourselves on.



**Christopher Allan** (or just plain Chris) is another photo nut! His passion for photography shines through in every shoot he is involved with (and he is involved with a lot). From shooting for the Survivor TV show, fashion shoots at the foot of a giant waterfall in Lesotho and industrial photographs in Zambia and Equatorial Guinea, he is the consummate photographic raconteur.

With roots in photo-journalism (a master's degree from Rhodes University) and several years working as an editor in Gallo Images, Chris has a keen eye for images that work, and is able to put this across in workshops and critique sessions.



More about CM and Chris on their personal websites  
[www.mullerfoto.com](http://www.mullerfoto.com) and [www.chrisallanphoto.photoshelter.com](http://www.chrisallanphoto.photoshelter.com).

## What to Expect:

Madagascar is one of those truly remote locations that few people actually consider visiting. This is surprising considering its size. From North to West it stretches some 1580 kilometers long and East to West, 570 kilometers wide (covering 590,000 square kilometers). The central spine of the island is dominated by a mountain range covered in the remnants of what was once dense rain forest. These mountains descend sharply on the east side to a narrow coastal plain while on the west there is a broader dry plain covered in savanna. We will be traveling in the drier western plain with its grass savannas and dry 'spiny deserts'.

Like southern Africa, Madagascar's seasons are essentially the opposite of Europe and North America's. The rainy season coincides with the northern hemisphere's winter. Traveling in May means that we will be traveling at the tail end of the rainy season. We have chosen to do this for a reason; dramatic cloud filled skies and more interesting sunsets and sunrises. The savanna also takes on a lush green colour compared to the significantly drier winter (which incidentally tends to have smoggy skies due to the prevalent use of fire for cooking and clearing of fields).

Temperatures can drop as low as zero degrees centigrade in June in Antananarivo, but can skyrocket into the thirties down on the west coastal plains. In theory, May to September is marked by cooler, drier weather. However, changes in global weather patterns mean that we are likely to have rain and all temperatures between boiling hot and chilly cold (those who have traveled to Namibia with Natures Light can expect similar temperatures to Luderitz: cold, and Keetmanshoop and Spitzkoppe: hot). Basically, prepare

for diverse weather, but it is unlikely to be colder than 5 degrees centigrade at any stage.

Due to the rains, which may or may not still be falling (we are expecting them not to), travel is going to be slow. The road network in Madagascar is not particularly developed. Most tourists opt to fly between major locations, but at significant expense on airlines that have completely unreliable scheduling. Locals use high slung buses and four wheel drive vehicles along with ferries across the numerous rivers.

To keep costs down as well as to allow for improved access to locations, Natures Light have opted to use comfortable air-conditioned four wheel drives (most likely Nissan Patrols and/or Toyota Landcruisers). There is an interesting adventure component to this trip as result of this, and it opens up image opportunities that would be missed otherwise (people crossing ferries, dugout canoes etc). Something to consider is to pack as light as possible since we will be doing a lot of traveling.

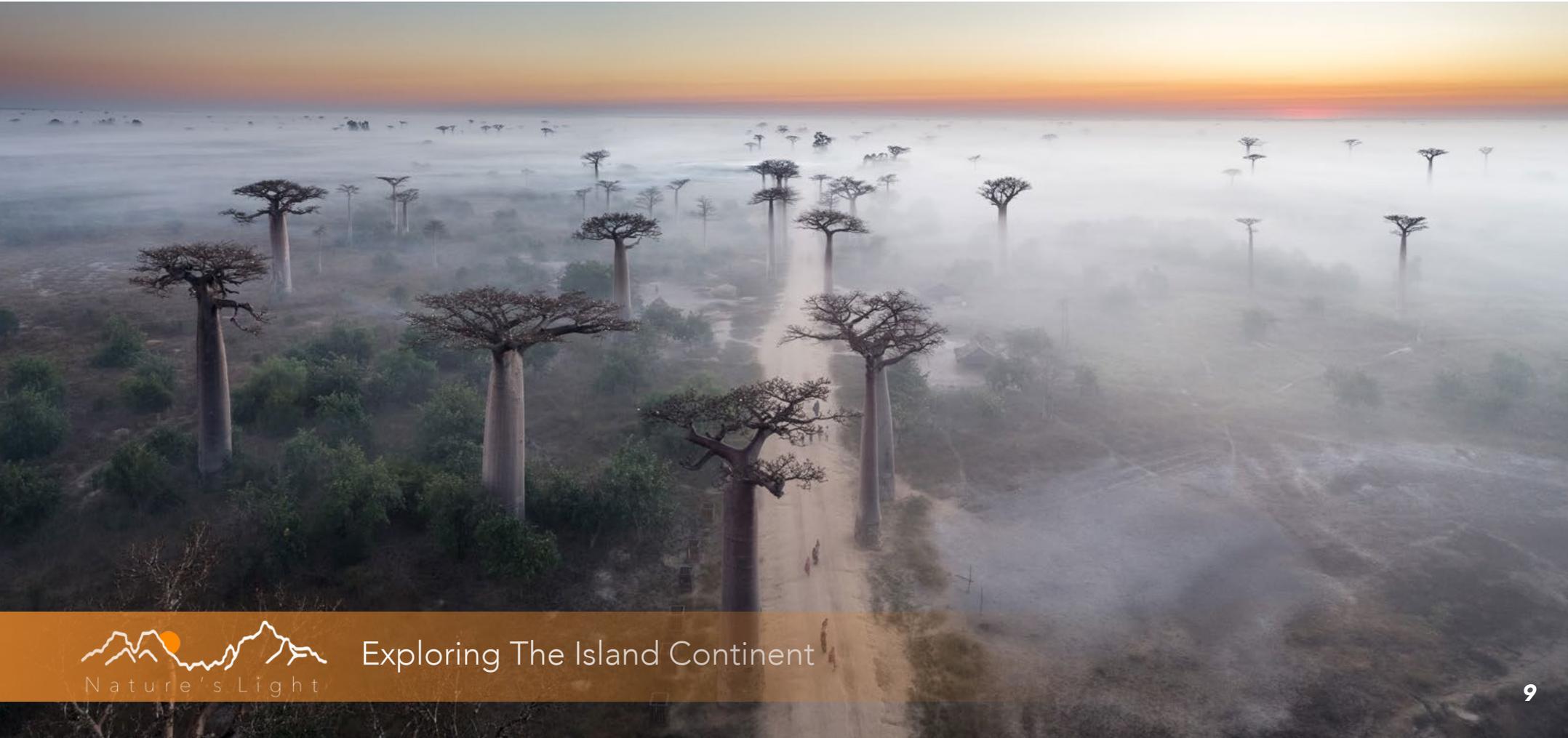
Malaria is prevalent in Madagascar, with resistance to chloroquine reported. Your doctor is likely to prescribe Malarone or Mefloquine (Lariam). Also consider bringing mosquito repellent along. An up to date booster for Hepatitis A and B and Tetanus is also a good idea.

Electricity can be a problem in Madagascar. In general electricity is 220V 50Hz with standard European French sockets. In the main towns electricity is from the grid but can be expected to dim and fluctuate slightly in the early evenings. Most lodges and hotels have their own solar power or generators that run from sunset to

about 9 or 10pm in the evening and again between 6 and 8am in the morning. All of the accommodations have been notified of our electricity requirements and have expressed a willingness to help out as much as possible with power for laptops etc, but be prepared to run out of 'juice' at some stage (more on this in [what to pack](#)).

Finally, this workshop is different to the usual Nature's Light workshops which concentrate on a particular genre of photography

such as landscape. Madagascar is the kind of place one tends to visit once. It is also home to things that people would consider iconic such as lemurs and the avenue of baobabs. As a result this is more of a travel photography workshop and adventure. We will be photographing people, places and animals, throwing in astrophotography and probably even abstract photography. It's going to be phenomenal!



## Daily Itinerary:

Once again, this tour is not a traditional, relaxed, holiday. Although joining photo shoots and/or teaching sessions is of course optional and you may skip some of them if you want, be prepared for some early mornings and some late nights. A typical daily itinerary looks like:

Wake up around 5-5:30am for a sunrise shoot

Return for breakfast around 8:00am

Four options (or a combination of them) depending on the day:

- A few hours private time where you can relax, get a nap, download photos
- Lessons or guided editing time
- Comment & Critique sessions
- Traveling - there is a lot of driving!
- Visiting locations

Lunch around 13:00pm

Three options depending on the day:

- A few hours private time where you can relax, get a nap, download photos
- Lessons or guided editing time
- Comment & Critique sessions
- Traveling to a location for a photo shoot or simply experiencing the island.

Afternoon shoot from 15:30 to about 18:00pm

Dinner around 18:30pm

Possible night shoot from 20:00pm onwards.

We cannot stress enough that this is not a typical lazy holiday. Some days are long, but the rewards of joining this workshop are phenomenal. Incredible locations, wonderful camaraderie, excellent photographic guidance and unique photography opportunities make for a sensational 15 nights on the island of Madagascar



*The Madagascar Photography workshop is a mixed travel photography workshop. This means that although we tend to concentrate on landscape photography, on this particular workshop there are aspects of wildlife, portraiture and street photography too.*



## **Madagascar Photography Workshop Itinerary:**

### **Day 1: Arrival in Antananarivo (International flight)**

Arrival in Tana in the afternoon, transfer to your hotel. Briefing and meet the team. Early night at Gassy Country House B&B.

### **Day 2: Tana - Morondova (internal flight)**

A very early breakfast and then we make our way back to the airport to fly down to Morondova. This is a short flight which brings us to the coastal town made famous by its access to the Allee de Baobab.

The short flight means we get some rest time before setting out to the fabled Allee de Baobab (Baobab Alley) which is about half an hour's drive from Morondova. We shoot the alley until dark before heading back to Morondova and the fabulous Chez Alain restaurant.

### **DAY 3: Allee de Baobab to Belo sur Mer**

One of the best times to see the famous alley of baobabs is in the pre-dawn light, long before villagers wake up and tourists arrive. For this reason we set out early to the baobabs in order to photograph these incredible giants under the night sky and a panoply of stars.

After our morning shoot we head back to Morondova for a quick breakfast before setting out to Belo de Sur. Belo is small village,





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but what attracts us to the area are the vast flat salt plains that stretch around the small village. Here we are able to shoot in the late afternoon as light plays out across the flat white expanse, or wander out to where the shore meets the shallow estuary system that feeds the salt flats. Coupled to this is of course the opportunity to photograph artisanal salt workers as they harvest the salt from the flats.

#### **Day 4: Belo to Morombe**

This is really a long travel day, but thankfully an interesting one. The sandy road between Belo and Manja can be extremely treacherous in some places and the drivers will have to select the most appropriate track depending on how high the rivers are. Most of the rivers have to be forded as there is very little infrastructure between Morondova and Tulear in the south. After the rainy season fords might have moved, thus it might take some time to find the right track. After 6 hours on a bumpy road we reach Bevoay where we cross the Mangoky River by ferry. After this the river and vegetation changes to thorny bush and baobabs and the road becomes the main road again (although you wouldn't believe it).

We spend the night at Chez Katia, A beautiful series of bungalows set directly against the ocean. It makes for a much needed finish to a long day of driving.

#### **DAY 5: Morombe to Andavadoaka**

Thanks to the previous day's drive, this is a relatively short trip to Andavadoaka. Here we are really in Africa with its bush landscape. We reach Andavadoaka on the coast in the early afternoon, allowing for some down time, or time to go over images. In the late afternoon we set out to photograph a stand of incredible Fony Baobabs. The next few nights will be spent at the wonderful Laguna Blu Hotel with it's phenomenal location along a shoreline of carved limestone features.

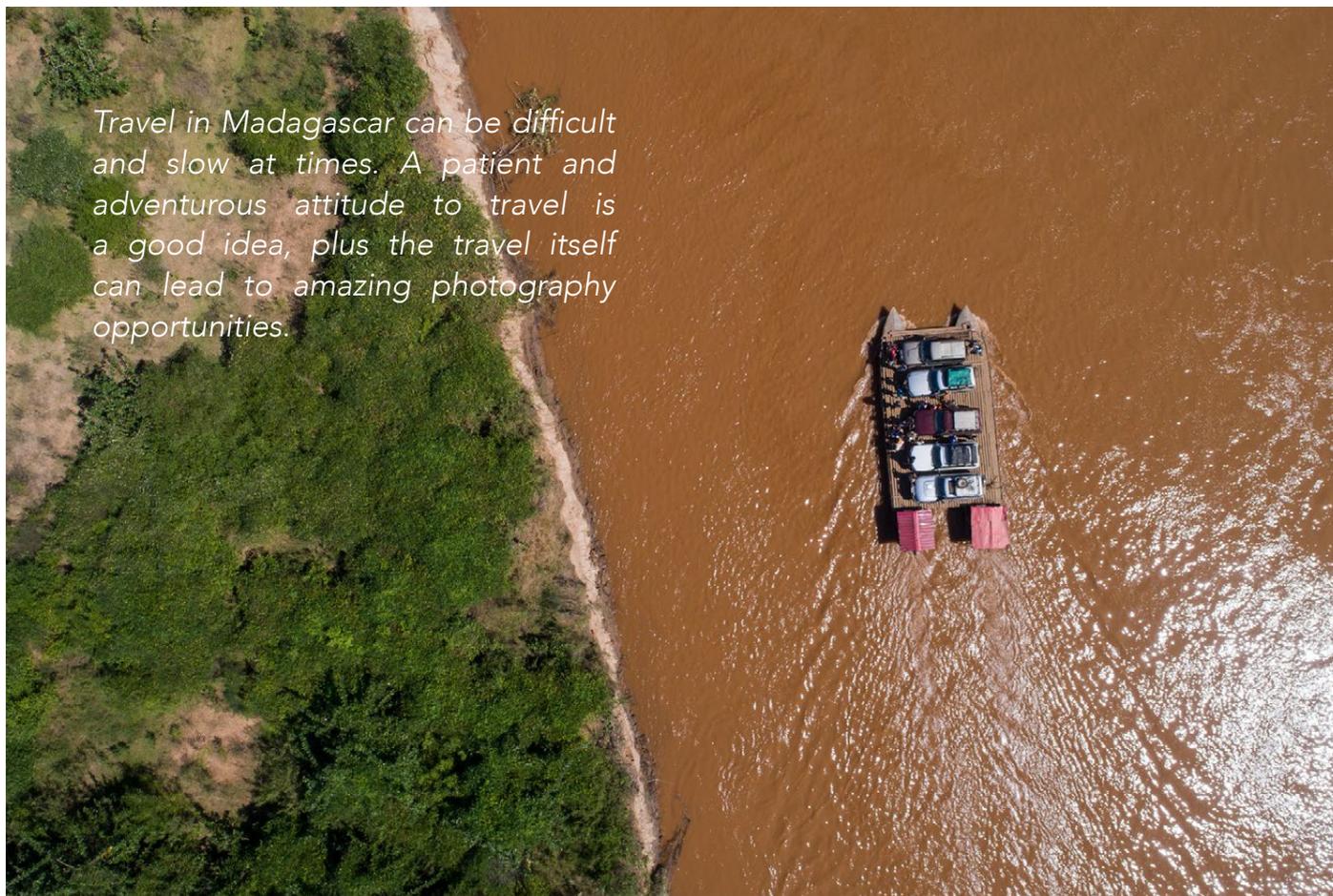
#### **DAY 6: Andavadoaka**

After several days of traveling the first morning shoot is entirely voluntary, although once photographers see the view outside their cabins they are likely to grab tripods and hurtle down to the shore.

Our location is chosen for the diversity of photo-shoots available



*Travel in Madagascar can be difficult and slow at times. A patient and adventurous attitude to travel is a good idea, plus the travel itself can lead to amazing photography opportunities.*



As with the previous day, we have the opportunity to explore, photograph various aspects of the area as well take part in Photoshop, Lightroom and critique sessions of images that have already been shot.

### **DAY 8: Andavadoaka - Ifaty**

After an early morning shoot we set out to an area north of Toliara. Today's track is relatively short but the segment near Befandefa is dreaded by all drivers : 30 km of soft sand. If you stop you're stuck, if you change gears you stop and are stuck. But the scenery is worth it: mangroves, mudflats, salt pans, dunes, the blue lagoon, and fishermen villages.

We have chosen the rest spot for access to the incredible black mangroves that litter the sides of an enormous brackish

water estuary system. Late afternoon and the following morning can be used to photograph these magnificent plants against azure like water and alabaster white sands.

within a relatively small area. We spend the time at Laguna Blu between photographing the local fishing village, the coastline, stands of baobabs and nearby ponds (when there is water in them) as well as the iconic spiny desert. Thanks to the time spent here, we also have the opportunity for some really interesting star trail and milky way photo sessions. To top it all off, our hosts at Laguna Blu offer an absolutely extraordinary dining experience to their guests.

### **DAY 9: Ifaty - Isalo**

After an early morning shoot of mangroves followed by breakfast, we set out for Isalo. The goal is to reach Isalo around lunchtime

### **DAY 7: Andavadoaka**



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so that we are able to explore the picturesque rocks around our accommodation. This is in order to catch the last light of day as it lights up the rock features against a pink and purple sky.

On the way to Isalo we also have the opportunity to stop from time to time to photograph the yellow grass plains as well as yet another species of baobab that can be found growing in the forests east of Toliara (depending on light and our travel time of course)

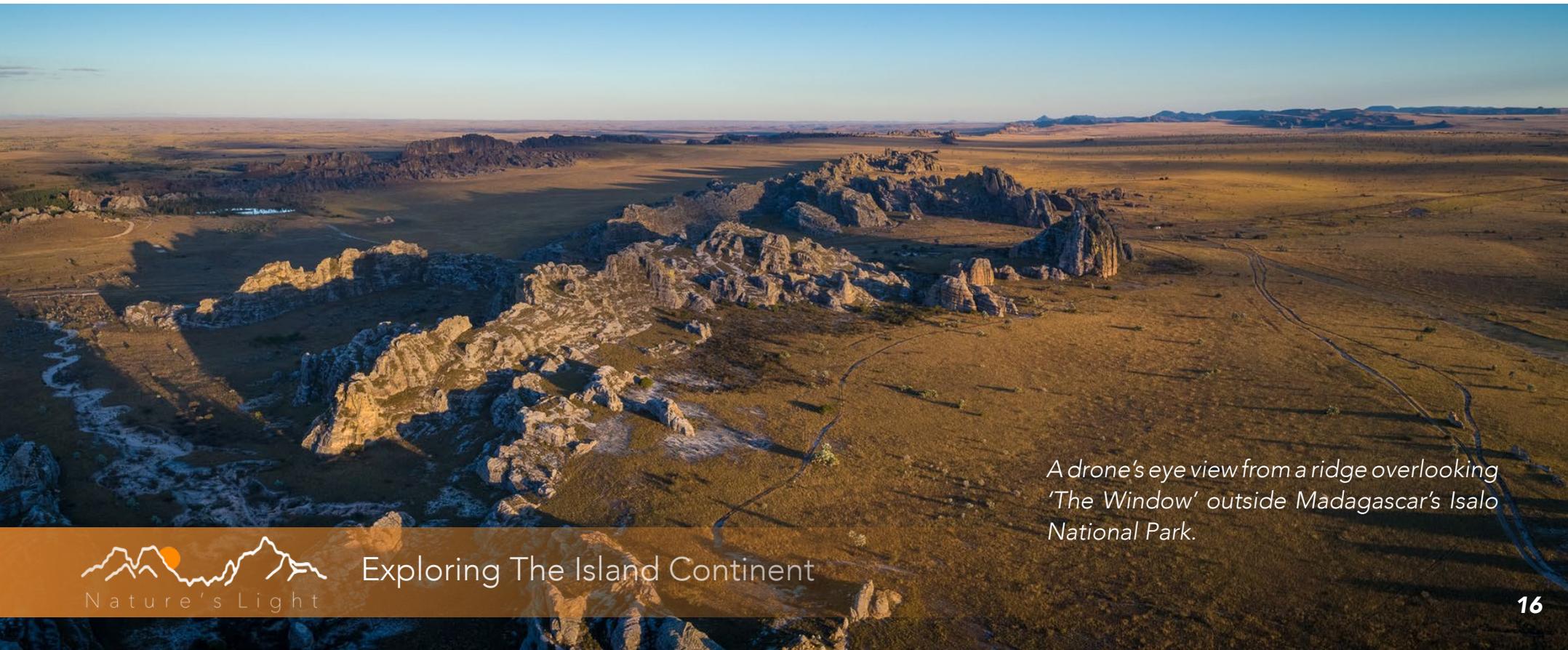
Along the way we also start to see a change in the villages and the people as we move into the Mahafaly and Antandroy territories. We'll see many tombs of these tribes as we pass. We cross the national park of Zombitse, a transition zone between the dry south

and the land of Isalo, a formation of continental sandstone rocks.

In the late afternoon we will set out on foot to a viewpoint nestled amongst the famous rocks. Here we are met by the welcome site of a camp already set up for us. This exciting part of the trip allows us to photograph inside the park at sunset, through the night and dawn, in our personal tents with catering and baggage handled by Momo Adventure Guides.

### **DAY 10: Isalo National Park**

Isalo is known for its geological formation. Composed of eroded sandstone colored red/brown by iron minerals and green by



*A drone's eye view from a ridge overlooking 'The Window' outside Madagascar's Isalo National Park.*

lichens, this mountain massif offers some of the most spectacular scenery in the country. The rock seems to lie in waves of sandstone and quartz that light up in shades of orange, red and gold in the right lighting conditions. Thanks to our night under the stars we are perfectly positioned for a phenomenal dawn shoot amongst the rocks. Also a feature of Isalo is the fact that it is a sacred place for the Bara tribes who bury their dead in the grottos and caves of the cliffs.

After breakfast we make our way to visit a small forest for glimpses of lemurs and the elusive white sifaka. It's then a short drive back to Isalo Rock Lodge, having earned some pampering time.

### **DAY 11: Isalo - Ambalavao**

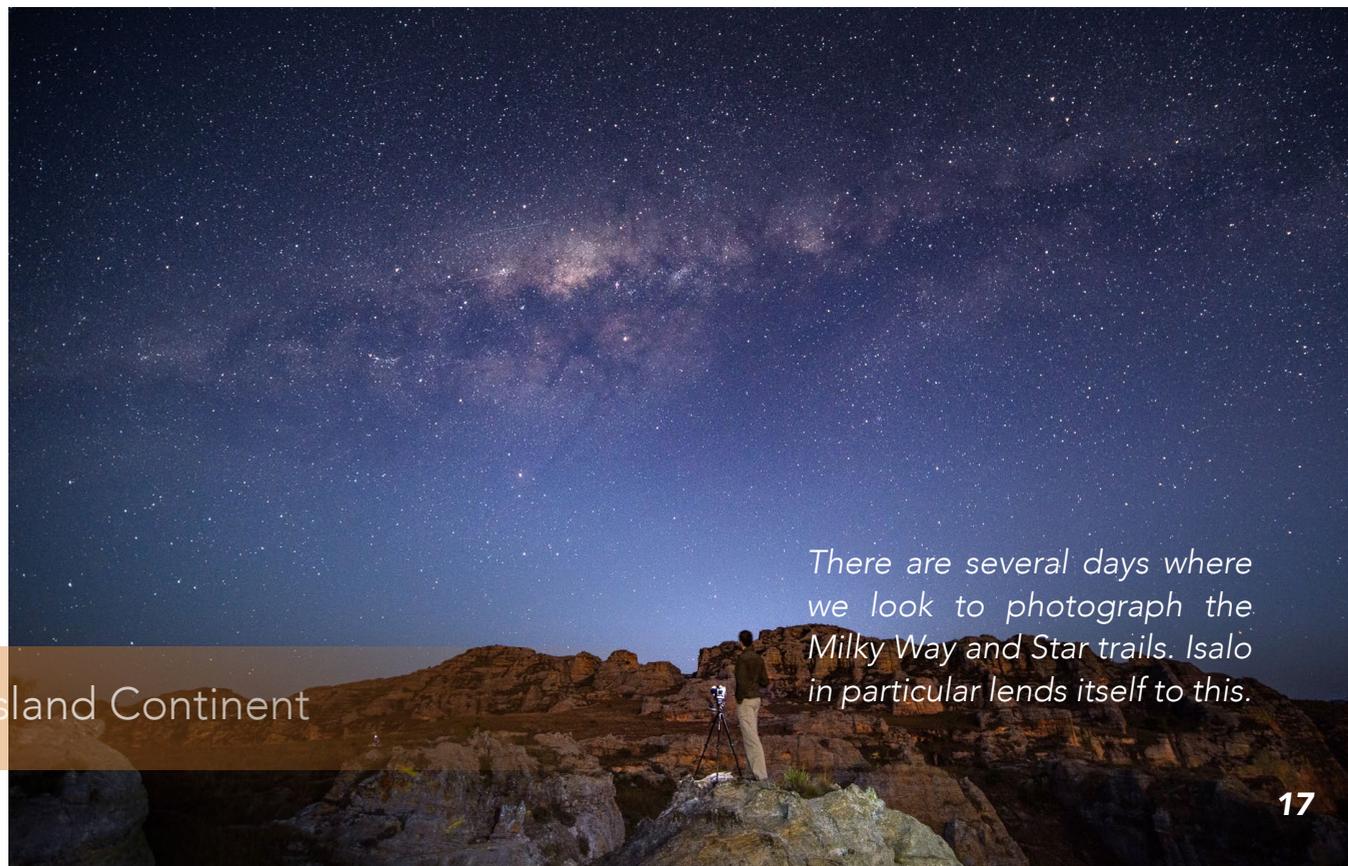
For those who feel like an early morning shoot there is the option of a dawn shoot amongst the incredible rocks around our accommodation. After breakfast, we head on to Ihosy, which is the capital of the Bara tribes who are shepherds of the iconic Zebu cattle that are a signature of the island. We pass through the huge "plateaux de Horombe" with its very spacious savannah. This is an excellent spot to view the typical Bara villages with their triple story structures and red mud plastered sides. While travelling across the plain we are also likely to see large herds of Zebu.

We arrive in Ihosy, the land of Bara who are

darker-skinned with African features if compared to the Merina. They are cattle-raiders and many activities during their life are associated with Zebu. The latter part of the drive is stunning as we climb into the mountainous interior of Madagascar. Along the way we will also pass the incredible "Bishop's Hat" - a granite massif that rises like a Madagascan Ayre's Rock from the grassland below.

### **DAY 12: Ambalavao**

Betsileo and the larger town of Ambalavao are nestled in a cradle of magnificent granite topped peaks. In the morning, as the sun heats the surface of the earth, the valleys are commonly shrouded in mist and fog that swirls around the base of the mountains. This can make for some extraordinary photographic opportunities.



*There are several days where we look to photograph the Milky Way and Star trails. Isalo in particular lends itself to this.*



Because of this, we have opted to spend three nights in Betsileo.

The days are divided between visiting Anja park, the zebu cattle market and traders market in Ambalavao and exploring the valley for landscape images.

Anja park is a community run sanctuary that lies snug against the base of one of the enormous granite peaks. It is one of the best places in Madagascar to see and photograph the ring-tailed lemur. Unlike other parts of the country the people in the valley consider it *fady* (taboo) to harm the lemurs. As a consequence the lemurs of Anja have no fear of humans and it is possible to get right up close to them for photography.

The nearby town of Ambalavao offers the unique opportunity to photograph the zebu market; a large open area that once a week plays host to hundreds of zebu and dozens of farmers who haggle and trade. Nearby is also the frenzy and bustle of the weekly market, which is a trove of photographic opportunities.

Naturally there are also the majestic mountains that surround the valley as well as the colourful mozaic of rice fields to keep the photographic eye busy, as well as time spent on Photoshop and Lightroom sessions.

## **DAY 13: Ambalavao - Antsirabe**

Today we leave the South behind us and enter The Highlands. In the town of Fianarantsoa, it is considered a must for photographers to visit the shop of Pierrot Men, Madagascar's most famous photographer. Although he travels and exhibits all over the world, you might just be lucky and meet him.

It's a fairly long drive as we twist along serpentine roads through the mountains towards Antsirabe.

Classic images of Madagascar can be created in the environment, particularly as we haven't quite reached the bustle and business of Antananarivo (which comes with other consequences such as a world-weariness of camera toting tourists). Antsirabe still offers





the quintessential Madagascan town without the trappings of the capital.

#### **DAY 14: Antsirabe - Antananarivo**

We set out in the early morning for a photowalk near Betafo Village, starting first at the mirror like reflection of Tatarina Lake. This fantastic experience allows the group to photograph the patchwork fields and villagers as they walk to market in the morning.

After returning from our photowalk and a late breakfast, we set off back to Antananarivo. Guests can depart in the evening but we strongly recommend waiting until Saturday to depart in case of delays on the road.

#### **DAY 15: Antananarivo - Departure**

Photographers can book flights to leave on the 31st May, or we can also help arrange a longer stay on the island. Shuttles are provided from Gassy Country House B&B, so departure times are flexible. Photographers can also opt to stay on a few days or do one of the city tours. Most photographers choose to fly out in the afternoon on one of the international flights to either Paris, Dubai, or Johannesburg.

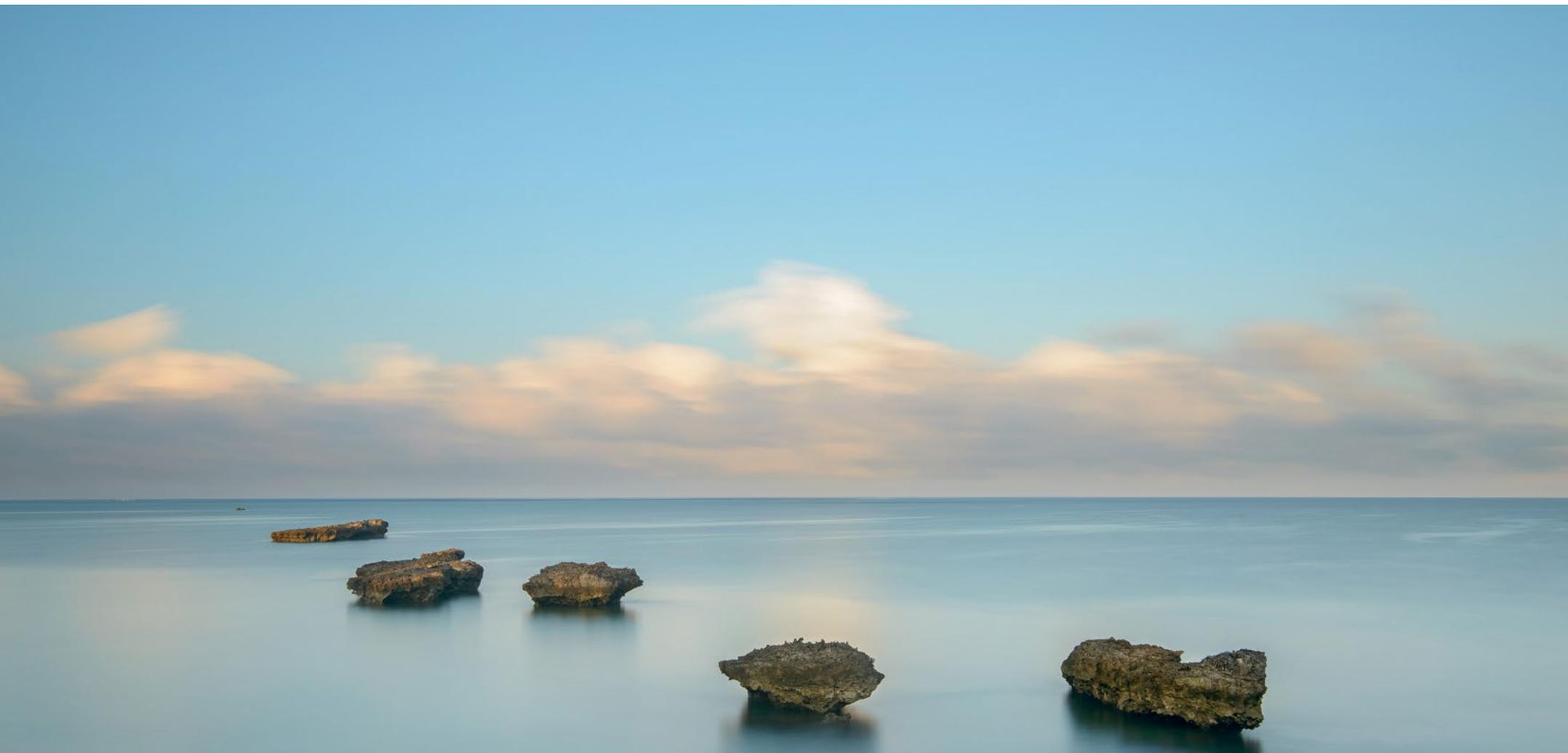
Colourful outrigger canoes on the south west coast of Madagascar. During the workshop we spend several nights along the coast with ample opportunity to photograph these iconic boats.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Plan of Day</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>
1	10 May 2020	Arrival in Antananarivo	Gassy Country House B&B
2	11 May 2020	Antananarivo – Mornindova (Internal airline flight)	Hotel Renala
3	12 May 2020	Morondova to Belo Sur Mer (270km roughly 4 hours journey)	Le Dauphin du Vezo
4	13 May 2020	Belo Sur Mer to Morombe (a long day - 10 hours of travel stopping along the way)	Chez Katia
5	14 May 2020	Morombe to Andavadoaka	Laguna Blu
6	15 May 2020	Andavadoaka	Laguna Blu
7	16 May 2020	Andavadoaka	Laguna Blu
8	17 May 2020	Andavadoaka to Ifaty (165km roughly 4,5 hours)	La Mira
9	18 May 2020	Ifaty – Isalo (265km roughly 5,5 hours including photography stops)	Camping in Isalo
10	19 May 2020	National Park of Isalo	Isalo Rock Lodge
11	20 May 2020	Isalo – Ambalavao (230km roughly 4 hours)	Varangue de Betsileo
12	21 May 2020	Ambalavao	Varangue de Betsileo
13	22 May 2020	Ambalavao to Antsirabe (300km roughly 6 hours)	Chambres du Voyageur
14	23 May 2020	Antsirabe to Antananarivo (170km roughly 4 hours)	Gassy Country House B&B
15	24 May 2020	Departure from Antananarivo	

Please note that times are rough estimates only. Roads are damaged annually due to the rainy season ending in March, and ferries can break down. Photographic opportunities can also waylay the group - we are photographers after all. Travel between Morondova and Toliara in particular is a large part guess work when it comes to times due to the perennially changing roads.

Note: As mentioned, the daily plan is flexible and will be tailor made around clients' needs and wishes. Estimated driving times are rough estimates taking into account stopping along the way for taking photos. Topics for teaching sessions will be determined during the tour after consultation with the participants, so you get to learn what you want to learn about.



## Accommodation and Logistics:

All accommodation, food and transport from and back again to Antananarivo Airport (and Gassy Country House B&B) where the tour starts and ends is included in the fee. The tour will be conducted in 4x4 vehicles each taking 3 people and their luggage (plus driver). Island Continent Tours provides logistics, drivers and vehicles to the group. At destinations, having multiple vehicles allows us to go to different shooting locations potentially, so that each participant has an opportunity to take unique shots, and so have plenty of space to move around without having to worry about getting into someone else's shot, or have someone else walking into their shot.

The table below describes the accommodation at each location:

Antananarivo	Gassy Country House B&B is the lodge attached to Island Continent Tours. It is a convenient 5 minutes from the airport and a convenient staging post for the workshop. Rooms are comfortable and the food tasty. By international standards it would probably be ranked as 3 star.
Morondova	We stay at the Renala Hotel, which lies literally on the edge of the beach. The hotel consists of small wooden cottages with en-suite bathrooms. There is power to charge cameras and the beds are comfortable. A fantastic restaurant is a short walk away (although the hotel's restaurant is also extremely good).
Belo De Sur	Le Dauphin de Vezo has a relaxed atmosphere with a series of bungalows that look out towards the Mozambican Channel. The accommodation is more akin to a Bahamas style beach holiday and gives fantastic access to the white sands and azure waters for photography.
Morombe	Chez Katia is a wonderful and well run series of chalets on the beach at Morombe. It is welcome respite after the long drive from Belo Sur Mer.
Andavadoaka	Laguna Blu is a fantastic beach side husband and wife owned resort. It overlooks an incredible limestone formation. The rooms are wonderfully comfortable with amazing outdoor showers. The food is phenomenal with the husband part of the team being a professional chef. We stay here for three nights for more than just the photography!
Toliara	Set just north of Toliara close to the Mangrove forests, La Mira is directly above the beach overlooking the Mozambican Channel. Accommodation is again in thatched Bungalows with an island flair and feel.
Isalo	The first night at Isalo is spent camping amongst the rock features that make the area so famous. We have teamed up with Momo Adventure Guides to create this incredible experience where our campsites are waiting for us after a short walk into the mountains.

Isalo	Nestled amongst the basalt rocks of Isalo, we have chosen Isalo Rock Lodge due to its proximity to stone features that we can use for night photography.
Ambalavao	Betsileo la Varangue is a quaint home style guest house run by a husband and wife team. It has been described as staying with your old aunt. Rooms are comfortable. Power is limited but we are allowed to use the solar array to charge during the day.
Antsirabe	Billed as an eco-hotel, Chambres du Voyageur is a beautifully decorated red brick series of buildings alongside a beautiful garden. Visitors have described it as an oasis with unmissable gardens and phenomenal staff service.

**Price:** €5935,00 - per person (approximately USD 6835,00 - as of October 2018 Exchange rates). Minimum 4 participants, maximum 7 participants.

Includes: All food, lodging, transport within Madagascar, tuition and workshop fees, park entrance fees, and bottled water

Excluding: Airfares to and from Madagascar, drinks, tips, souvenirs and items of personal nature.

Single Supplement: €500, subject to availability





## What to bring:

### Photography Equipment

- A digital SLR camera, Emil and Nick both shoot with Full-Frame cameras, but any interchangeable lens camera will work perfectly on the workshop including, crop-sensor DSLRs, the new breed of mirrorless cameras and Micro Four Thirds cameras will also work perfectly well. We don't recommend using compact cameras because of their serious limitations or the 1" sensor cameras which don't have the same tolerances for landscape photography that M4/3s and larger sensor cameras have.
- A good quality tripod, preferably one not made of plastic. We can help you choose a suitable one if you don't already have a tripod.
- A wide angle lens (Emil and Nick use wide and ultra-wide angle lens as a matter of preference). For a full-frame camera we would recommend at least a 24mm lens or wider. Astrophotography benefits from lens as wide as 14mm. (APS-C lenses being at least a 16mm with a ultra wide of 10 or 11mm being good for astro).
- A telephoto zoom lens, such as a 70-200 or 70-300.
- If possible, a lightweight telephoto lens such as a 100-400mm or 300mm f4 is a good idea as we will be spending some time trying to photograph Madagascar's iconic lemurs. However, as much as a large 200-400mm f4 or 500mm f4 would be appreciated for the lemurs, it will be difficult to transport and carry (walking is involved). The new lightweight Nikon and Canon 100-400 zooms are ideal for this type of trip.
- A camera remote (cable release) or intervalometer.
- For anyone serious about getting into landscape photography, a filter set consisting out of graduated Neutral Density filters and a polarizer, is indispensable. For long exposures of the ocean we also highly recommend a full neutral density filter such as the Little and Big Stoppers from Lee. We strongly recommend investing in a set before arrival. Let us know if you need help choosing the right set.
- A laptop with editing software already loaded. Emil and Nick personally use Lightroom and Adobe Photoshop with Nik plugins.
- A backup hard-drive for backing up images (it would be terrible to travel to the Madagascar only to lose all the images if a laptop hard-drive crashes).
- Batteries! This is very important. Electricity supply is not always stable, so extra batteries are essential. Be able to shoot for 48-72 hours (with night photography involved) without charging. Mirrorless cameras require more batteries than DSLRs so please bear this in mind.
- Chargers and adapters. If you have a 12V charger, bring it, otherwise make sure to be able to charge via a standard European (French) socket.

## What to bring:

### Personal Equipment and Clothing

- Personal medications and toiletries, sunscreen, anti-malarial medications. Medicine for diarrhea and stomach ache is highly recommended. The food is very rich in Madagascar and most travelers complain upset stomachs at least once. We also recommend a course of pro-biotics during the trip, but check with your GP before doing so.
- Wide brimmed hat
- Backpack (Your camera backpack is fine for this) with a waterproof slip-on cover.
- A small camera bag for keeping a camera and other small essentials with you in the vehicle.
- Decent shoes that can be used for walking as well as a pair of sandals for beach, rivers and traveling in. Lightweight walking boots are a good choice.
- Torch or headlight (also useful for 'painting with light' at night).
- Lightweight travel towel - although towels are provided a lightweight microfiber travel towel is worth its weight in gold for emergency camera drying etc).
- Clothing: Shorts, long pants, long-sleeved shirts (to protect against mosquitoes), underwear and socks. Please make sure to bring a pull-over, jersey or jacket as evenings can be cool and the interior can get rather chilly from May onwards.
- Rain-jacket. Although we are traveling at the start of the dry-season there is still a high likelihood of rainfall during the trip.
- If you are concerned about power during the trip, a nice extra is one of the new portable solar and battery kits such as the Power Monkey (for cameras) or Power/Solar Gorilla (for cameras and laptops). These are excellent, but you will definitely be able to get by without this during the trip. Nevertheless a backup charging solution is a 'nice-to-have'.

## Frequently asked questions:

- **Do I have to do anything?** On this particular workshop, not much at all apart from enjoy yourself, learn a lot and enjoy the Madagascan scenery and the incredible location.
- **Can I have a room to myself?** Yes. This tour and its price is based upon sharing accommodation with other participants of the same sex. At some locations there are simply no other rooms/ chalets available, as we have booked out the entire bed and breakfast, so there you will have to share. At the other locations you could potentially have a private room, if available. The costs for the single supplement is to be determined depending on availability options. Obviously we do also cater for couples in which case partners share a room.
- **Can you cater for special dietary requirements?** To a limited extent, yes. We eat in restaurants throughout the journey, and menu choices are sometimes limited. Please do let us know of any dietary requirement you have and we can see what we can do.
- **Is Madagascar safe?** Madagascar is on the whole safer than most other African countries. We are with experienced guides who will be able to help with advice on where to go and what to do, so you will probably be safer on the trip than anywhere in Africa.
- **Do the tour leaders take photos themselves?** Yes they do. However, the emphasis is on teaching and guiding you throughout the course. Our experience has taught us that most participants enjoy teaching sessions interspersed with 'try-out-

alone' time, where they put the taught techniques into practice. Moreover, landscape photography is all about seeing the beauty in the land, which for each individual is different, and then to be creative with it. To have a teacher talking you through every step along the way in the field will hinder the development of your creativity, as you are not 'pushed' to try things for yourself. Hence, our teachers will be there when you need them in the field, give tips and directions, regularly checking on each individual participant to see if they need advise, but don't be surprised if you see them taking photos themselves in between helping other participants - Also, there are two dedicated instructors on the workshop and a maximum of six participants; you are guaranteed to get assistance with your photography when you need it!

- **How fit do I have to be?** Relatively fit. Physical difficulty for this tour is rated as low to intermediate. For the most part, our locations are drive to and wander about. There is also the option to forgo the walking aspect entirely, but this may mean missing some excellent photography opportunities. The one caveat is that the ride in the vehicles is physically taxing when we travel between Morondova and Toliara
- **Should I be concerned about the water or any other health issues?** Where water is not potable, bottled water will be available and provided. In terms of health concerns, if you are concerned please consult with your GP or travel doctor. It is still advisable to bring your own personal medications. Antihistamine, pain-killers, insect repellent, sun-tan lotion (NB!), Antiseptic cream and plasters are always a good idea. There are ticks in the grass wherever we go due to the large amount of

cattle, so insect repellent and long trousers are recommended.

- **Do I need anti-malarial medication?** In theory yes! A resistance to Chloroquine has been reported with Mefloquine (Lariam) and Malarone being advised by the WHO. An anti-malarial medication can be easily obtained from your GP or travel doctor. However, we are travelling outside of the malaria season in the drier south where the incidence of malaria is very low. We would recommend you confer with your GP, or a travel doctor. Our local partner, ICT, advises that anti-malarials for this route are not required, but you forgo these medications at your own risk.

Booster shots for Hepatitis A and B are also recommended along with a shot for Tetanus. Also be aware that Rabies is prevalent in the feral dog population of Madagascar.

- **Is there Internet Access?** In some locations there is Internet access and main centers also have Internet cafes. The easiest form of communication though is via cell-phone. If you have a phone that is 'un-locked' you can buy a local sim-card to make phone calls and access the Internet (there is 3G and 4G available in some parts of the country).



## Contact and Bookings:

If you would like to join us for Exploring The Island Continent , you can make a booking by contacting Nature's Light at:

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Terms and Conditions are available on:

<http://www.natureslight.co.za/termsandconditions>





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